

Hocart—Lau Islands, Fiji

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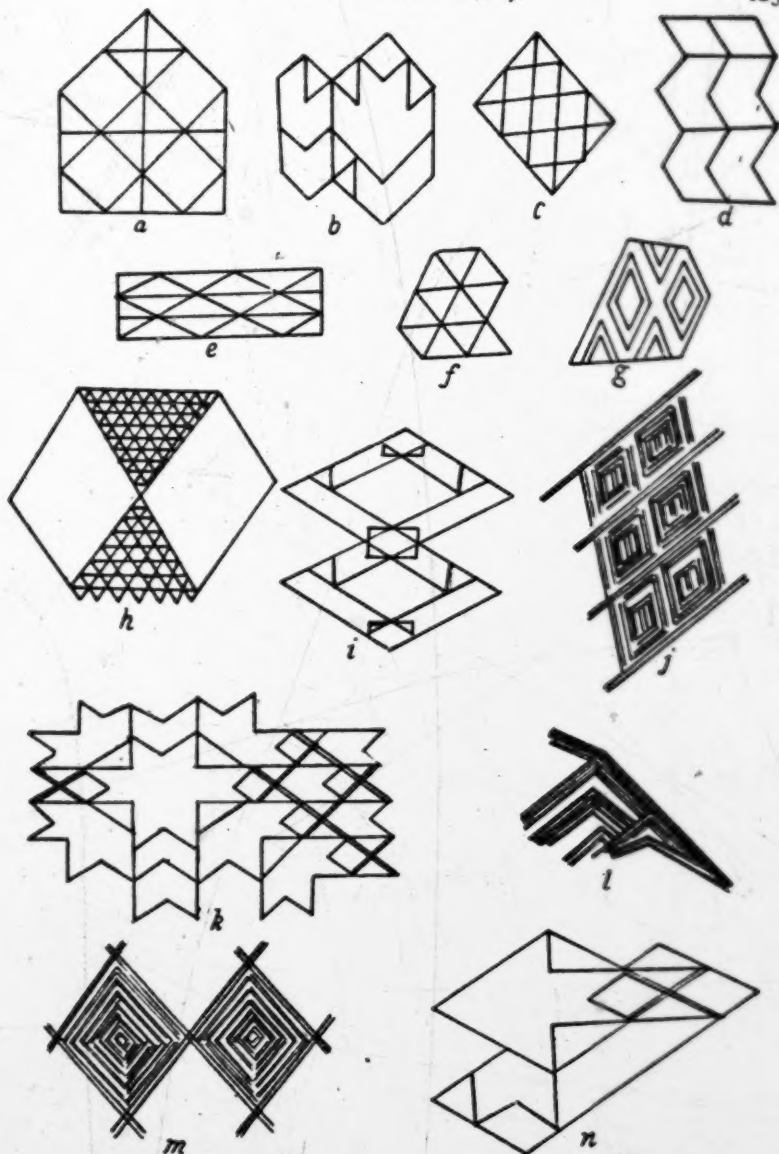
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FIGURE 8.—Lashing designs: *a*, *manufekainaki* (side post); *b*, on main post; *c*, *fatuingalau*; *d*, *veikuku*; *e*, *manufekainaki* (side post); *f*, *manuluva* (extremity of the base of king post); *g*, *malanindavui*; *h*, *fufuikiu*, diagram from main post; *i*, from extremity of base of king post; *j*, *fatuingalau*, diagram of strands; *k*, from a wall plate; *l*, from a side post; *m*, from a main post; *n*, analysis of *k*.

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A *Dracaena*, producing a fine brown color. Cloth so colored was used for turbans (i sala).

Patterns consisting of conventional leaves, stars, and so forth, are sometimes scattered on fine white bark cloth, *masi tutuki*. The tapa is stencilled with patterns placed so close as to make the whole appear as a white on black design—the large patterns are called “flower prints” (i *tutuki se ni kaiku*), the small ones, or reed prints (i *ngasongasau*). Tapa thus decorated is used for turbans or hung on the wall-plate; some of it also is smoked.

Some is painted with a liquid obtained from the reddish bark of the *tea* and the root of the *ngandoa*; the two may be mixed together. The mangrove root, which is darker, is used in the Southern Islands. The men bring in the wood, which the women scrape with shells (*kai ndina*; *kuku*) or bits of tin, then shred it, saturate it with water, and stuff it into a long sack made of matting of strips of *vau*; as they fill the sack they wind coir string round it. At both ends of the sack is a rude rope of *vau*; by means of these one end is hung on a tree, and a stick is passed through a loop at the other end; a woman takes hold of each end of the stick and the two walk round and round, twisting the sack and squeezing out the red juice.

For stencils the dye is boiled until it becomes gluey and very dark brown; it is then mixed with lamp-black and a red earth (*umea*), probably ocher. The lamp black is obtained by burning candle-nut in a confined space so that all the soot is collected. The ocher is found only in the island of Komo; it is moistened, kneaded into a mass and dried. It is used by the Komo people as their manufactured produce (i *yau*). When required for use the block is scraped. The stencils are cut out of banana or *Pandanus* leaves laid on the piece of cloth to be ornamented. A small pad of bark cloth is dipped in the dye, dabbed first on the lamp black, then on the red ocher to thicken the stuff, then rubbed on the stencil, which is applied to the cloth.

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The patterns consist of designs in rows separated by lines varying in number which are called frames (i *wanggani*); frames appropriate to various patterns are named for them. These frames are stencilled on first, and as there is a certain order of patterns so there must be a certain order of frames. (See Pl. IV, A.)

In Plate IV, B is shown a piece of tapa with the frames filled in.

Many patterns are formed by placing the same stencil in different positions or by using two stencils. Thus *kamiki* (Pl. IV, B, 3 and 11) appears first as two parallel lines; the same stencil is then laid crosswise, thus cutting up the lines into two rows of squares. Then another stencil plate is taken with a plain isosceles rectangular triangle, and is used to blot out half of each square (Pl. IV, C). The *sivo* is produced with one long isosceles triangle and one small square.

Certain rules are followed: the “frame of the hatching” (*mbika*) and “dripping water” cannot be interchanged; the Tahitian may not be on the outside, nor Kalinisei’s on the inside; *kamiki* has a fixed place. This arrangement is designed as a border for a large sheet of Fijian bark cloth

(p. 134). I have never seen it in stencilled pieces which are complete in themselves and not forming a sheet (*ngatu*). In these single pieces is usually a border, inside which are patterns longitudinally from end to end or disposed in checks; there is usually a fringe of red hatching called *vakalewenimbisi* (like the flesh of a *mbisi*).

The style I have described is that of Lakemba; it is short, whereas in Thakaundrove and Matuku "it is made long." In effect the whole work in Lakemba is done by laying short stencils one beside the other, whereas in Thankaundrove long lines are painted.

In Lakemba stencilling is almost, if not entirely, confined to Wathiwathi. All my specimens come from there, except one from Ono, and all my information comes from those two places. In Tumbou a few know how to stencil, but they do it only on large sheets in Fijian style, not on single pieces.

In Tumbou the work is almost entirely in the Tongan style, on large sheets made up of many pieces and covered with red brown designs produced by rubbing. These sheets are called *ngatu* and are used for such things as blankets, dancing dresses, screens.

Formerly if a woman wanted to paint bark cloth (*kesakesa*) her friends would without invitation come to help her. A feast would be made for them, each one getting a basket of food. Now they have guilds called *kauta* (from the Tongan *kautaha*, or else *kampani*, company) and each guild has a workshop. At present there are two in Tumbou: the Big Company (*kampani levu*) or Nandawa in Tai, Muritu, or the Second, in Tumbou quarter; one in Levuka. Formerly there was a third one, called Torotoromalua, in Tumbou. The guilds are called together by the beating of a hide drum, and hold councils to discuss the work, for instance to make a sheet for the child of one of the members, another time for another member. They have a president, a secretary, and sundry officials. The Native Gazette states (11, p. 136, 1905):

The President will say, "Tomorrow let all the members of the guild beat out bark cloth to the number of ten or twenty score." Before dawn the sound of the drum is heard and each one strives to achieve the amount set by their President. On the evening of that day the drum is again beaten to summon them to their President, and they are asked if they have each completed the allotted task or not. After that the President again decides what shall be done on the morrow, whether to cut copra, make sheets, or any other work. The money they earn from time to time by cutting copra is not divided up; it is brought and placed in the public chest (*kato ni tu*) to be kept. When the President sees there is enough bark cloth beaten out, she decides thus, "Tomorrow let us make a sheet for Lady So-and-so." In this way the Lady So-and-so is not in the least burdened with a workers' feast (*otho*). The workers' feast is entirely in the hands of the President. They will be fed out of the company's funds kept in the public chest. The Secretary will withdraw the amount of money

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required for the beef, tins of biscuits, sugar, tobacco, kava, and other things for their use.

In the workshop there is a large convex board on which the patterns (*kupeti*) are made as follows:

String made of *tou* is wound round the end of a strip of mangrove; another strip is placed next to the first and the string wound once round, and so on; then the string is wound again round each strip but lower down, and so on until a kind of grating is made on which screwpine leaves are fixed, the result being a kind of card (*i raka mata*). The designs are made by laying bits of ekels¹ on the card according to the desired figure and sewing them on with coconut fiber, the whole is then smeared with the dye (*kesa*) used for bark cloth; this acts as a glue. The designs are generally called birds, or animals (*manumamu*). Whereas stencils are geometrical, these plates are naturalistic.

In addition to those illustrated in figure 11, the following names of applique patterns for tapa were obtained from Mbau: centipede, pipi fruit, *sesea* fruit, *kusi*, a bird; and from Tonga bats hanging from a tree.

Each worker brings her own pieces of bark cloth. The women sit on either side of the board provided with pots of raw dye, and with boiled manioc for glue. Two elderly ladies (*marama ndina*) are appointed to deal out the pieces to the workers; their title is *vakatautulu*.

First they lay a long broad piece of bark cloth along the board, on which no rubbings are made, but lines are carefully drawn across it at intervals; this piece is called *tapa mua*, front border. A second piece is stuck alongside the first with manioc; the women dip their pads of bark cloth into the raw dye and take a rubbing on this piece; but not at the ends, which are merely marked with a number; these ends are called *tapa*. This second piece is then smeared with manioc and short pieces are laid across it along the whole of its length and rubbed. Then the longitudinal piece is shifted and another piece is laid on the board overlapping; it is rubbed, and smeared with manioc; the transverse pieces are stuck down upon it and rubbed; and so it goes on, each new long piece being numbered at the end. The long pieces are called *lailalo* (Tongan, the leaf below), and the transverse ones *lailunga* (the leaf above). It is the task of the dealers to sort out the leaves properly. A patch is called *i momo*, a Tongan word for which the Lauan is *i potani*.

The work proceeds gaily and noisily, the workers chatting away. Sometimes they will strike up snatches of Tongan dances. Kava is made and served at intervals. Now tea has replaced the *hoho* pudding which formerly was provided.

The work is measured thus: the length of the board is one *lalanga*; each *lalanga* therefore repeats the whole set of design; ten *lalanga* forms one *lau*; ten *lau*, one *lautefui*—all Tongan words.

On the next day, if the weather is fine, the sheets are put out to dry. One of two women draw black lines across with boiled dye to mark off the *lalanga*; the dye is laid on with ekels. Here and there dark brown discs (*tukisea*) are painted with boiled dye. The sheet must on no account get wet.

Besides Tongan drapery (*ngatu vakatonga*) there is a Fijian drapery (*ngatu vakaviti*) also called *ngatu tasinga*, which may roughly be described

¹ Rils of coconut leaves.

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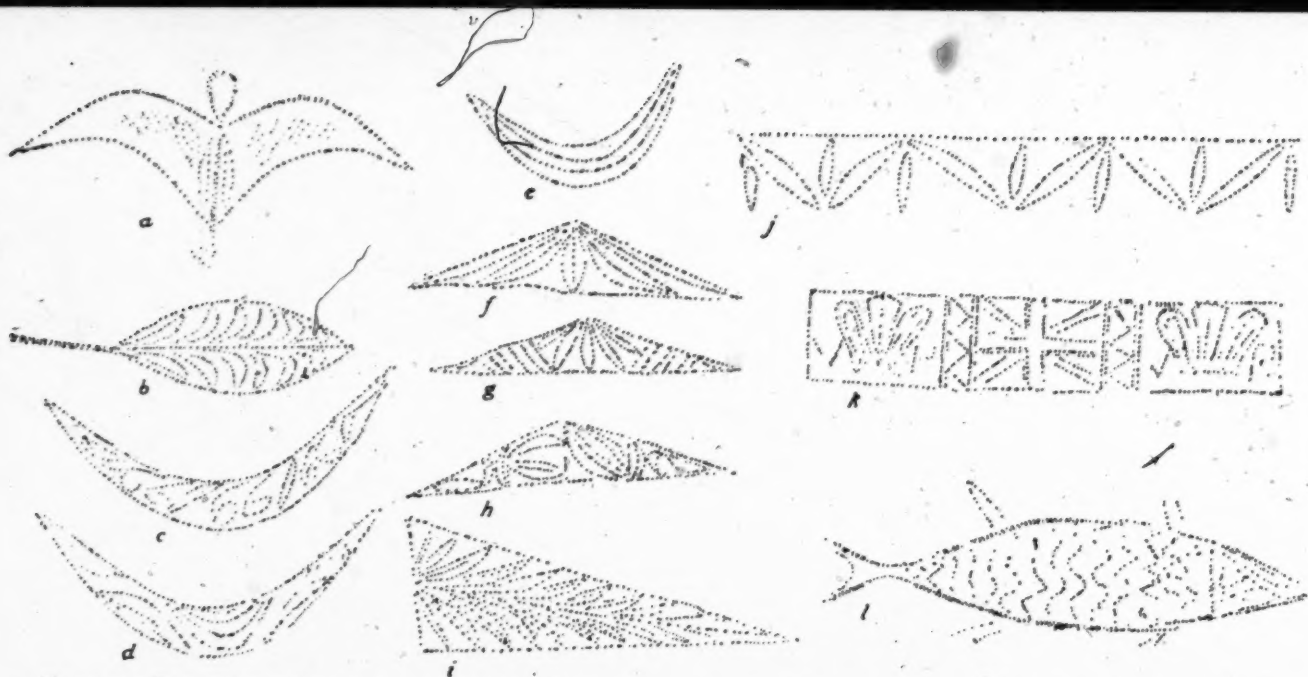


FIGURE 11.—Patterns for applique on tapas: a, bat (designed by Tongan woman); b, fan (*iri*, from Mbau); c, d, e, moon (*vula*, c, e, from Tonga); f, *mbua* leaves; g, h, i, name not learned; j, *mamba* leaves (Mbau); k, *sala ni Tui* (Mbau); l, fish (from Nasangalau). (Drawn from rubbings.)

287 as Tongan drapery with a black-stencilled border, but the technique of it differs in the following particulars:

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531 The pieces have to be beaten out with care to be like paper, whereas for Tongan drapery they are beaten out roughly; the pieces are called *vakathimba*, not *tutu*; pieces with holes in them or soiled or reddish in color are not admitted as they are in Tongan drapery; to collect enough pieces is therefore a lengthy process; it takes two, three, or four years; different pattern plates are used of a Fijian design. Plate IV show them to be purely geometrical. There is only one thickness, all the pieces running lengthwise; the pieces are not glued together but moistened with fresh water, placed so as to overlap and beaten till they adhere firmly together, a process called *thokothoko*; no black lines are drawn to divide the *lalanga*; in fact there are no *lalanga*. Some specimens have two patterns disposed in checkers; others, two alternating bands of patterns. Dark discs are painted on here and there, but are called *matanisea*, not *tukisea*. When the reddish rubbings are complete the sheet is handed over to an artist to put in a stencilled border called *potu*; some sheets have two borders; others have a third band down the middle; some have as many as four bands, but not in Lakemba. Fijian drapery is a noble thing (*metha vakaturango*).

MAT MAKING

285 Mats are made of *kie* leaves. Mat making is rarely seen in Lakemba as most mats are brought from the Southern Islands. The process is as follows:

The leaves are dried in the sun for about three weeks; then cut with a shell into equal strips which remain attached at one end. The strips are made very fine for the border. The fringe is now made of colored wools, but is still called *kula* after the parrot that used to supply the feathers. Some mats have black strips inserted to form designs, but most are plain.

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Fulanga mats are distinguished by their softness and are used for beds. Ono mats are small, rather stiff and made of very narrow strips two or three together with patterns in black. They are called *tambu kaisi* (forbidden to commoners), not that they were actually forbidden, but they were beyond their means.

OIL

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Lau is famed for its scented oil, which is made as follows:

Coconut ~~is~~ grated to fill a basket, then baked in hot stones. Perfumes are added. A favorite one, sandalwood (*yasi*), is not found in Lau; the best comes from Mbua. When a piece of sandalwood has been procured, two or three young men will come in of an evening to rasp it. The dust of the sandalwood is mixed with the coconut, along with *mamba* fruit and *langobali* flowers. The mixture is then spread on a sheet of corrugated iron slightly tilted; the sun brings out the oil, which flows down into a bowl. Finally the pulp is squeezed to get out all the oil, which is bottled and corked with a stopper made of a leaf, rolled into a cone.

Tomeric is grated, mixed with water, and allowed to settle. It is then mixed with oil.

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In Tumbou and Nasangalau if the sun will not shine when they want to "sun oil," the people sweep the floor of the church and the sun shines.

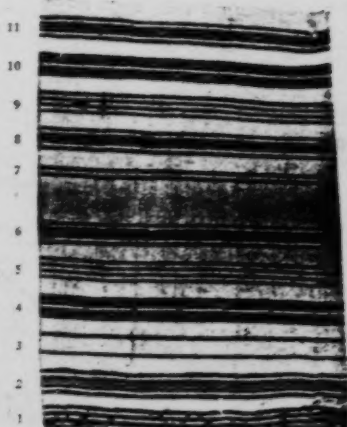
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BULLETIN 66, PLATE IV

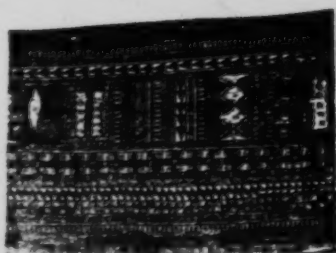
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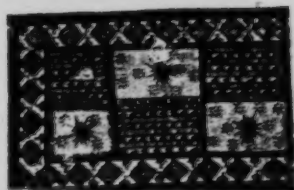
A



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C



D

LAUAN BARK CLOTH DESIGNS: A. FRAMEWORK; 1. FRAME OF RED, FOUR LINES SO CALLED BECAUSE THE CENTRAL WHITE LINE IS FILLED IN WITH THAT COLOR; 2. FRAME OF MBIKA; 3. NAME UNKNOWN; 4. DRIPPING WATER, WAI KATIRI, PART, I BELIEVE, OF THE BROAD WHITE STRIP IS RED; 5. FRAME OF THE RED; 6. FRAME OF THE MBIKA; 7. WITH THE WIDE SPACE BELOW FORMS THE CENTER OF THE DESIGN; THE OTHER BARS ARE REPETITIONS OF THOSE BELOW; 8. FRAMEWORK FILLED WITH DESIGNS, J. VAKALINISEI, KALINESEI'S STYLE; 2. VEIMBALEYAKI, FALLING APART; 3. KAMIKI, FALLING APART; 4. KUMETE NDRUA, DOUBLE KAVA BOWL; 5. VAKATAITI, TAHITIAN STYLE; 6. VATHU NI TAURUKU, BROW OF THE CAVE; 7. VETAU (TONGAN, FETAU, NAME OF A TREE), IN CENTER A DESIGN SOMETIMES CALLED FAWPAW FLOWER, THE BLACK TRIANGLES BETWEEN THE TWO VETAU ALTERNATELY LEFT BLANK AND PAINTED RED; C, D. STENCILLED DESIGNS ON BARK CLOTH.

[End Plate 4]

- 881 The patients were confined for about a week in either the tattoo house or their parents' homes under the care of the tattoo specialist. Food was provided for them by their parents.
304 They were not allowed to bathe in the sea, to leave their houses except in case of necessity, or to be seen by men.

When the design (*nggia* or *sothondra*) which covered the girl's thighs was completed, it resembled a pair of black shorts. It was hidden by the girl's skirt of hibiscus bark (*liku*). After the thighs had been tattooed a design (*samunggaue*) was tattooed on the back of the fingers between the knuckle and the first joint. Then a design (*tawelu*) consisting of a half-moon filled in solidly with black was tattooed on each corner of the mouth. The designs on the fingers and the mouth showed that the girl was nubile.

- [424] Each specialist had her own designs, which resembled designs seen today on bark-cloth. The designs for a chief's daughter and those for other girls differed, but no one [531] knew what the difference was.

When the entire process was finished a feast (*kanakana ratu ni nggia*) was held. The girls bathed in the sea for the first time after the final operation and their bodies were oiled and clothed in barkcloth. They were usually married soon after this ceremony.

- [17] Informants believed that tattooing was introduced into Lau by immigrants who came from Viti Levu and founded the chiefs' phratry in Lau. This would identify the tattooing complex with the high Fijian culture of eastern Fiji (p. 215). According to Roth (20), tattooing is still practiced surreptitiously in the provinces of Ra on Viti Levu and Mathuata on Vanua Levu. Its survival in these provinces, which are strongholds of the high Fijian culture, substantiates the above hypothesis. (See also Brewster, 1, pp. 185-186.)

Today, some boys and girls have their names tattooed on their arms by anyone who has learned to write. This is done with a needle and any dye. Names are often misspelled and letters inverted.

BETROTHAL

- 584 Child betrothal (*watchi ni suthu*) is common in Lau. The boy's father arranges his betrothal to his female cross cousin, the preferred mate, some time before he reaches the age of seven or eight. Having chosen a mate for his son, the father discusses the matter with the elders of his clan. If the match is approved, he collects a whale's tooth, mats, tapa, and other property from his relatives. Several male members of the clan present the formal proposal (*lakovakina*) accompanied by the property (*i lakovaki ni tchikina*). After considering the matter the girl's clan sends a representative with the answer to the boy's clan. In recent times the proposal and the answer are [17] occasionally written in pencil on imported paper. If the proposal is refused the property is returned. If it is accepted the two children are called *watchi* (spouse) and gifts of food and property are made at intervals by the boy's father to the girl's father. When the children reach the age of seven or eight they are informed of the arrangement.

- [583] Child betrothal is not binding, but natives say that most child betrothals are consummated in marriage. If either the boy or the girl does not care to

342 **Wall thatch.** For thatching the walls of dwelling houses *ngasau* (*Miscanthus japonicus*) reeds are preferred because of their durability, but on the limestone islands where *ngasau* reeds do not grow, wall thatch is made of coconut leaves. Coconut leaves for thatch and sticks of wood (*mbola vatu* or *langakali*) for thatch supports (*latu*) are gathered by the men of the village. The coconut leaves are placed in piles and left for three or four days to soften. On an appointed day the men of the village meet to erect the wall thatch. The old men plait the coconut leaves and the younger men remove the bark from the *latu* sticks and place them around the wall at regular intervals, about 60 cm. apart and 30 cm. in the ground. Their height is determined by the height of the wall plates.

The thatching starts on the right side of the front entrance, at one end of the house, just below the roof. It is done in pairs, one man standing inside the house does the tying, the other outside handles the thatch.

First, two thicknesses of thatch, placed with thick lower ends toward the doorway, are tied with a piece of sennit to a thatch support (*latu*) just below the roof. The same piece of sennit is carried downward along the thatch support (*latu*) and used to tie the thatch, which are placed one below and outside the other, about 8 cm. apart. To tie the thatch the man inside pokes a pointed wooden needle (*sau*), threaded with a piece of sennit, through the thatch just below the midrib and just on the other side of the thatch support. The man inside loops the sennit over the needle point and pulls through, making fast a half hitch. The process is repeated until the last thatch is fastened about 3 cm. above the ground. The leaves of the lowest thatch lie on the ground outside.

The thatching proceeds away from the main doorway. A second panel is placed and tied like the first. When the side door is reached one thatch (called *onaliku*) is placed vertically and tied in with the horizontal rows of thatch (which are thin at the upper ends) so that the left side of the doorway may be the same strength as the right side, which is formed by the thick lower ends of the coconut leaves.

The house usually has four entrances (p. 65).

[554
● 531] Occasionally a few cowry shells are tied with sennit to the wall outside a large house. These shells formerly were a symbol of rank used only on a chief's house or other property, but now they are used merely for decoration. On some houses an extension (called *loru*) of the upper ridgepole projects about a meter beyond the roof on both ends of the house. The natives say it is purely decorative. It frequently is a separate piece of carved wood and it usually curves upward into a thickened end. On a house in Muanaira, Fulanga, it consists of an old pineapple club.

Final Ceremony. When the mats have been laid, the *kanusivi vale* (spitting upon the house) ceremony is held. If the owner has plenty of food, this feast is attended by the whole village, otherwise by only a few close relatives. The guests sit in a kava circle in the house, and kava is served. After drinking, each man spits and tosses the dregs from the cup onto the floor at the side of the house, or against the wall. A feast is served after the kava ceremony.

396 The canoe is steered with a heavy, long-bladed steering paddle (*uli*) made from greenheart inserted between the deck and the innermost stringer. It is attached to the canoe by means of a rope tied to two holes in the upper end of the blade. A large piece of coral tied with rope is used as an anchor. The [415] wooden bailer is the typical Oceanic scoop with handle within the cavity of the scoop.

- [531] **Shell ornamentation.** Fine canoes belonging to members of the nobility are often ornamented with cowry shells lashed to the tip of the head-board, [622] the masthead, or the outrigger. Formerly shells were used only on canoes belonging to chiefs.

504 **Repair.** Holes or cracks in the hull are repaired by inserting a wooden patch inside the hull and calking the seams with *yangai* pitch made soft with a glowing brand. Ongea men are said to be skilled in canoe repair work. Nearly every Ongea canoe shows a crack at one or both ends due to the inferior timber found on the island.

396 **Launching.** When a canoe has been completed a large feast (*solevu ni wangga*) is held by the builder and his clan for the carpenter. Whales' teeth, barkcloth, mats, or sennit are presented ceremonially to him. Kava is made and food is eaten by the owner on the deck of the new canoe. Eating and drinking on the canoe are forbidden until this ceremony lifts the tabu.

396 At the launching of the canoe a race (*rova*) is held. The owner provides barkcloth and occasionally mats and oil. These are suspended to poles held 526 upright by young girls. The young men gather at some distance from the girls who sing rhythmically:

Toro, toro tchikau, toro voli yani tchikau.
Vaka vaka o! Rova pu!

Move, move from there to here.
Ready, go!

At the last two words the racers start running toward the girls. The winner gets all the property he can carry. The remainder goes to the carpenter. On this occasion the canoe is named, often for a child of the owner. Canoes are [552] known by their names. A canoe is occasionally a memorial to the dead (*larua* 763 *ni mate*—sail of the dead).

[504] The completed sailing canoe is not housed in a shed but is beached and covered with coconut leaves or sheltered under a leafy tree.

PADDLING CANOES

501 Paddling canoes, like small sailing canoes, are used inside the reef for fishing, turtle hunting, and intervillage transportation. On the island of Namuka where the art of sailing canoes has been lost, paddling canoes are still used for fishing in the lagoon. They are poled in shallow water. They are built of local wood on practically every island and are usually smaller,

287 *Masi tutuki* usually consists of two or more lengths of tapa, two thick-
 531 nesses each. It is the width of the original strips (60 cm. to 1 meter) and is
 frequently several meters long. The edges are often cut into a fringe. It is
 decorated with a stenciled design in which the whole surface is either treated
 with a single circular unit called *vutu*, repeated in black on a field of white
 and edged with a border of black and brown geometric designs, or is divided
 by longitudinal lines into bands filled in with geometric designs in black and
 red brown. *Masi tutuki* is worn on ceremonial occasions and hung along the
 lower tie beams of a house as a wall decoration.

287 The design unit used for stenciling is made by folding the leaf of the
 531 banana, *vutu*, or pandanus and cutting it in such a way that it opens out into
 386 the desired unit. The open leaf is then spread on the surface of the barkcloth
 as a stencil and a piece of tapa dipped in dye is daubed over it. A relatively
 small number of design units are repeated and recombined according to one
 general pattern in most of the stencil work. Each design area and each unit
 is named (fig. 16).

The red-brown dye, called *kesa*, used for stencils and rubbings on tapa, is
 made by one of the following recipes.

(1) The inner bark of the mangrove and the *ngandou* are soaked in water in a
 wooden bowl for two days, the water is poured off, the bark is beaten with a stone
 824 pounder on a stone slab, water is added, and the mixture is strained and boiled. (2) The
 inner bark of the *kesouesi* or *yariyasi* (*Eugenia*) is scraped, strained, and boiled. (3) The
 inner bark of the *sikethi* is treated in the same fashion. All three recipes are used on
 Namuka but the Namukan women say the first two are the best. On Kambara, where
 the mangrove is absent, only *ngandou* is used.

Black dye is made by boiling brown *kesa* dye for several hours. It is also
 438 produced by mixing brown *kesa*, soot, and red ochre (*umea*) imported from
 Komo.

287 The steps in tapa making described above can be carried out by one
 woman working alone. The process of joining strips into large sheets requires
 the cooperation of many women. According to the Fijian method the strips
 are joined by the felting process. I witnessed the felting process on Mothe
 where 14 women from all three companies were making a sheet of Fijian
 sheet tapa to be presented as tribute (called *ngatu na ka vanua*) to the high
 chief.

Tapa boards and old dugouts were placed end to end, to form a long tapa board.
 The women, each with a mallet, sat in a row along one side of and facing the board.
 Four damp, oblong strips were fitted together with parallel grain, to form one piece of
 four thicknesses. Twenty such units, of four thicknesses each, were passed out by the
 leader. The women spread them out lengthwise along the board and fitted them end to
 end. At the seam the piece consisted of eight thicknesses dovetailed with four thicknesses
 in the center, two above and two below. At a signal from the leader the women beat along
 the seam, the grooved sides of the mallets diagonal to it. The beating was done in unison
 and could be heard throughout the village. Next, the seams were sprinkled with water

from small basins, one for every four or five women, and patted. The long damp piece was then shifted and the whole process repeated several times. The resulting sheet is called *katundrau*. 287

Two joined pieces are called *vesiku*. The next day the *katundrau* was spread on the village ceremonial ground to dry in the sun.

The design for Fijian sheet tapa is a formalized pattern made partly by stencil and partly by rubbing on tablets (p. 199). The surface of the sheet 287 531

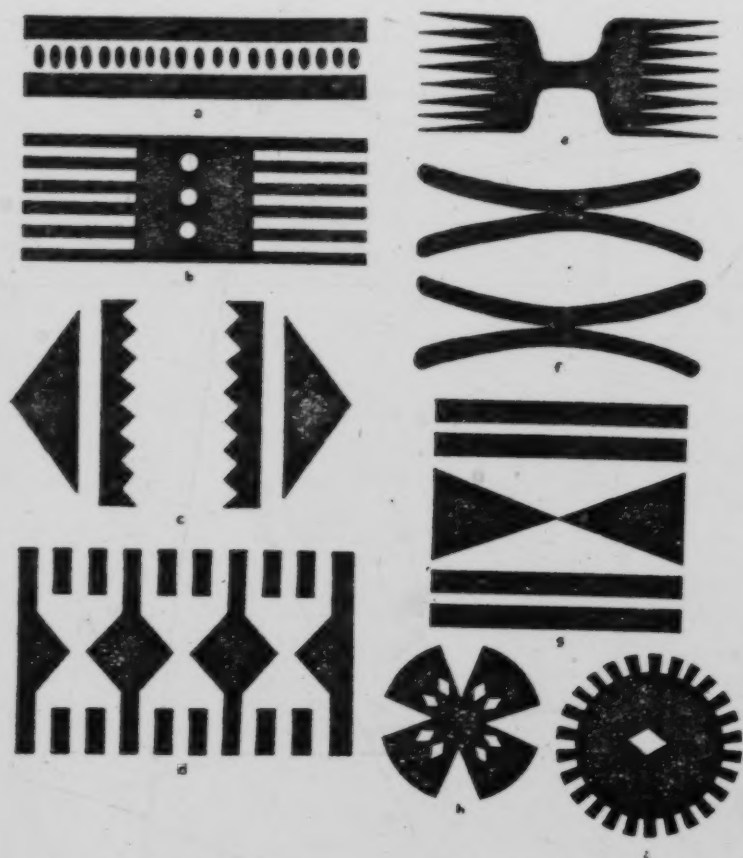


FIGURE 16.—Stencil designs used on tapa: a, *i wanggani* (cut from pandanus leaf); b, *vaka toitchi* (banana leaf); c, *vetow* (pandanus leaf); d, e, *i-seru* (banana leaf); f, *ndrawndrau nggivi* (banana leaf); g, *vetau ngganga* (banana leaf); h, i, *vutu* (vutu leaf).

287 is covered with rubbings with dye on a tablet except for a deep border along
531 one edge which widens at regular intervals. The border is covered with stenciled geometric design units repeated regularly.

No two designs for Fijian tapa are identical, but each piece shows a unique combination of the same design units within the formal pattern. Vika, of Namuka, an expert in making Fijian sheet tapa, says she never copies another's designs but when she starts working on a sheet the design comes to her and she knows just what to do next.

Unfortunately time did not permit a thorough study of the creative process in connection with Fijian sheet tapa design. Such a study, however, would probably yield valuable results.

287 Fijian sheet tapa is never cut up into pieces. It is used to screen the
531 nuptial bed from the remainder of the house in weddings of rank and to cover a corpse before burial. It was formerly used as a mosquito curtain (*toi namu*). According to the natives the best Fijian sheet tapa is made on Matuku Island.

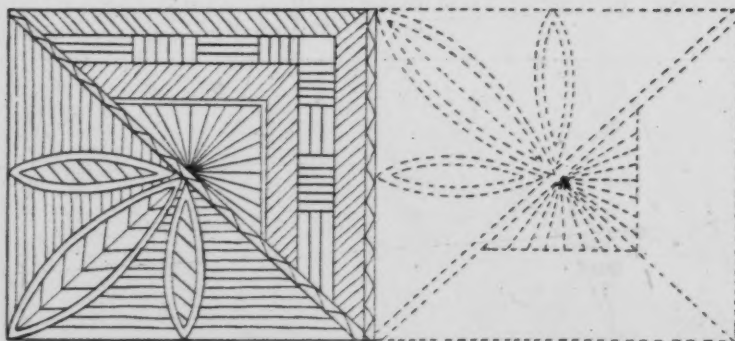
THE TONGAN METHOD

Tapa made by the Tongan method is coarser than that made by the Fijian method, and for it coarse types of paper mulberry are used. The first steps in the process are the same as those for making tapa by the Fijian method except that the inner bark is not scraped in order to clean and whiten it. The dried coarse strips of prepared inner bark called *tutu*. Tongan sheet tapa (*ngatu vaka Tonga*) consists of a great many strips (*tutu*) joined by pasting (*totou*) into sheets which are frequently 4 meters wide and 75 meters long. The fruit of the *yambia*, boiled, peeled, and soaked in fresh water, is used as the adhesive agent; and the strips are joined only between February and August when the *yambia* is ripe.

287 Dye is applied by the method of rubbing over the surface of the barkcloth,
531 which has been placed on thin tablets (*kupetchi*) ornamented with designs in relief. There are several types of tablets.

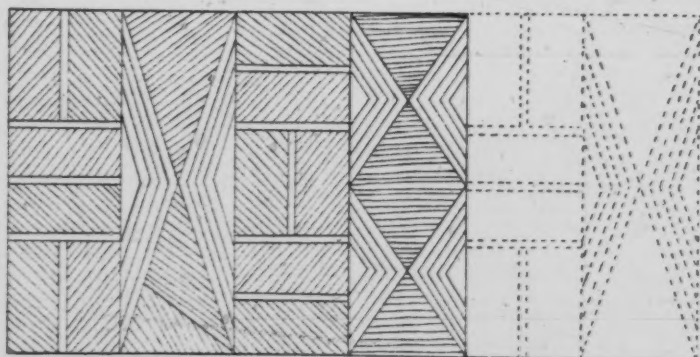
(1) The *tatau* type consists of long slats of mangrove root, 0.5 cm. in diameter, rolled with hibiscus bark and sewn in designs onto a background of pandanus. Twine is used today instead of hibiscus. This type was formerly made in Vanua Mbalavu and Lakemba. (2) The *sasa* or *ichikinikupetchi* type consists of midribs of coconut leaflets tied with sennit or hibiscus onto a background of pandanus. This type was formerly made in Ono. (3) The *tui* type consists of midribs of coconut leaflets tied with twine onto a background of coconut fiber. It was formerly made in Tonga.

438 Tablet designs consist of geometric figures and figures taken from nature
(fig. 17). Tablets are not made on any of the islands under consideration. They have been imported from Tonga, Ono, Vanua Mbalavu, and Lakemba. They are valuable possessions of individual women, inherited in the maternal

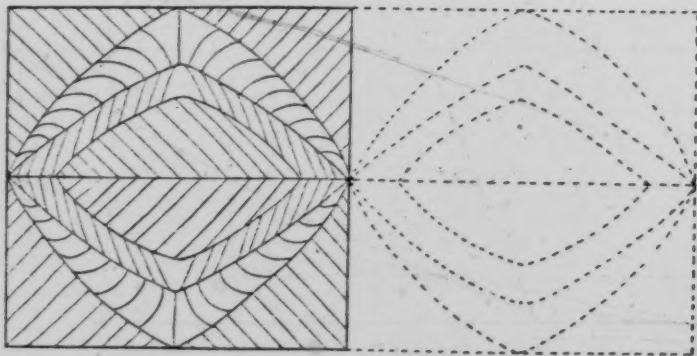


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531 ●



b



c

FIGURE 17.—Tablet (*kupetchi*) designs used to make rubbings on tapa: a, twisted cord sewn with pandanus strips on banana leaf background, 50 cm. long, 23 cm. wide; b, c, midrib of coconut leaflet tied with hibiscus strip onto pandanus leaf, 48 cm. long, 24 cm. wide.

287 line, and often used by many women on one island. The tapa makers of
 531 Namuka own a series of tablets in common, which were a gift from the wife
 of the late Ratu Finau. They are kept by the women of Nasoiya clan. Accord-
 ing to the old women, tablets were introduced into Lau when the women
 learned to make barkcloth by the Tongan method. According to Fison (8,
 p. 162), designs used for tapa sheets in Fiji were formerly carved in relief
 on wooden tablets.

After a woman has beaten enough strips to make a long sheet of tapa, a
 day is set when the women of her company or of the village assemble early
 in the morning to help her join them. A woman who is expert at tapa making
 is in charge of the work. She is called *vakaitututu*. The husband of the
 woman whose tapa is being joined provides a midday feast (called *i ngga ni
 kesakesa*) for the helpers.

The tablets are placed on a board or an old inverted dugout. A long strip
 of tapa consisting of two strips pasted lengthwise at the edges with *yambia*
 glue, is stretched over the tablets and the surface is rubbed with a piece of
 tapa dipped in *kesa* dye (p. 196). The surface is then rubbed with *yambia*, and
 strips are pasted crosswise, so that the piece consists of two thicknesses of
 inner bark. The crosswise strips are rubbed with *kesa*. The whole piece is
 shifted and the process and design repeated until all the strips have been
 joined into one large sheet covered with red brown rubbings. Long sheets of
 Tongan tapa are marked and measured by lengths called *lalanga*, which corre-
 spond to the length of the board or dugout (*papa ni kesakesa*).

The sheets are stretched out on the ground to dry in the sun. When dry
 some of the large design units such as circles and isosceles triangles are out-
 lined (*tothe*) with black dye by means of a shell or a piece of broken imported
 slate. I have seen 30 women working on one sheet at the same time (pl. 2, C).

Long sheets of Tongan barkcloth are used in presentations such as tribute
 to high chiefs, ceremonial exchange, weddings, and deaths. The sheets are
 presented outstretched and are held along the edges by women. Sheets of Ton-
 gan barkcloth are frequently cut into smaller pieces to be worn as a kilt or a
 wrapping for the whole body to protect it from the mosquitoes or the cold.
 Tongan barkcloth is also used for bedding and draperies.

MATS

PANDANUS-LEAF MATS

285 Mat (*yambe*) making from pandanus (*kie*) leaves is a specialized industry
 confined to the women of certain islands in Lau. Among the islands visited
 pandanus mats are made on Fulanga, Ongea, and Kambara.

285 with wefts 3 mm. wide. It had a border of black geometric designs and a
352 wool fringe.

A kava mat (*yambe ni yanggona*) is slightly larger and coarser than a baby mat. It is unornamented.

An eating mat is long and narrow with coarse weave. One used in the high chief's household in Lakemba was about 28 meters long and 3 meters wide, with wefts 2 cm. wide. The edges were fringed with pandanus.

285 *Yambe volavola* are pandanus mats decorated with black geometric designs
● 531 in twill or check weave made with wefts dyed black. The designs are placed across the entire surface of the mat in lengthwise or diagonal bands or lines, at the corners of the mat in triangles, or around the edge of the mat as a border (fig. 18). The designs are named. A zigzag line is called *wangga ni vasua* because it resembles the *vasua*, a shellfish. A border composed of short parallel diagonal lines is called *somovuni*. The black dye (*somo*) is made of *sikethi* (p. 89).

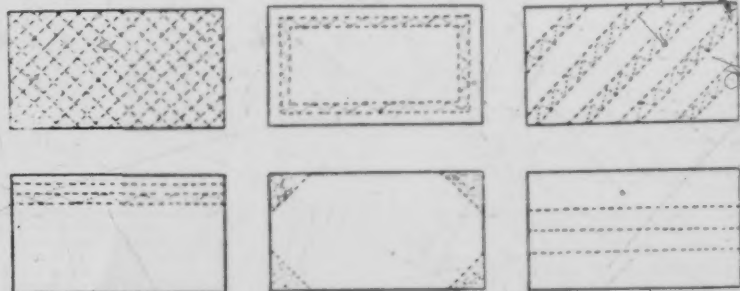


FIGURE 18.—Sketches of mats, showing design placement.

285 According to aged informants, a very soft mat, called *latha*, was formerly
[354] used as a sling to carry infants on the back or the hip. The *latha* was of fine weave and about 2 meters long and 45 cm. wide.

[292] Another fine mat, the *tawala*, was formerly used as a dancing kilt. One corner of the mat was bent down and the mat was tied around the waist with a piece of barkcloth or sennit. Old mats worn by mourners are also called *tawala*.

[622] A very fine, white mat, called *tawake*, was tied to the mast of a chief's canoe as a flag or emblem of rank.

[237] Natives say that mat fringe, although called *kula* (red parakeet), was formerly made of rooster feathers or of the inner bark of the *sitchi* in southern Lau. The feathers from the red parakeet were used to fringe mats in the Moala group but not in southern Lau, according to informants.

302 Coconut oil is the most important cosmetic in Lau. Strongly scented with fragrant flowers, leaves and bark, it is rubbed after bathing on the legs, arms, breasts and on the hair. It keeps the skin soft in spite of constant exposure to sunlight and salt water, and imparts a sheen to the hair.

[833] Dressing for a festival, the young people pour on oil until their bodies glisten. As they dance in long rows their shining rhythmic bodies look like bronze statues. The pungent scent of oil in a small native hut, however, is almost suffocating. Coconut oil holds an important place in the Lauan art of love, not only because it stimulates the senses by keeping the skin smoothly lustrous and fragrant, but also because it reduces the friction between hot bodies mating in the breathless damp warmth of the tropics.

292 To participate in important ceremonies both men and women wear barkcloth. This is a soft, durable, fibrous material
267 made of the inner bark of the paper mulberry. It is elaborately
[531] stenciled with bold geometric designs in black and red ochre. Ample quantities of this cloth are wrapped around the hips and gathered at the waist with a band. Wreaths of green leaves, bright flowers, and strips of dyed hibiscus bark complete this striking ceremonial attire, which is a survival from olden times.

272 All important ceremonies are accompanied by drinking of
276 "kava", the narcotic root of the *Piper methysticum*. Kava is the favored native drink of the South Seas. When crushed and mixed with water, kava root produces a mild intoxication which frequently affects the legs rather than the head. Its reaction varies with the individual: on some it acts as a stimulant, on others as a sedative. Curiously enough, the novice can outdo the confirmed kava drinker, for the reaction is increased and accelerated by habit. The preparation and drinking of kava root is always accompanied by a colorful ceremony. The drinkers sit in a circle in which the chief has the place of honor. Opposite the chief sits the kava mixer,

585 clans took place, the bride and groom became the central
[614] figures.

Out of the house used as the groom's headquarters came four girls, each bearing one corner of a large mat stretched at full length. Just behind them walked a person I took to be the bride, wearing yards and yards of Tongan barkcloth,¹⁵ extending from the armpits almost to the ground and tied around the waist with a piece of pandanus. This festively clad person turned out to be the groom, whom I had failed to recognize in ceremonial attire. His body was oiled, and around his neck he wore an elaborate wreath of leaves and hibiscus bark dyed burnt-orange (with *Morinda citrifolia*). His upstanding hair was bleached rust color. He wore a head ornament consisting of two red and blue pompoms of imported wool, fastened just above the temples to a barkcloth headband.

The procession walked to the bride's house where the mat was placed on a piece of Tongan barkcloth in front of the entrance. The procession walked over it into the house. There the groom left his outer garment as a gift to the bride's relatives, and returned in his *lavalava* of Fijian barkcloth¹⁶ to his headquarters.

Next six girls, carrying an outstretched piece of Tongan barkcloth, emerged from the bride's house. They were followed by the bride, resplendently dressed in a voluminous outer garment of Tongan barkcloth like the groom's. She wore a wreath like his but no ornament in her hair, which was sprinkled with fragrant, powdered sandalwood. The bride and her attendants walked to the groom's headquarters where the barkcloth was placed in front of the entrance. The procession walked over it into the house. In the groom's

[287] ¹⁵ Barkcloth made by the Tongan method of joining strips of bark by pasting
[531] them together to form long sheets, and ornamented by rubbing the sheets with dye
over raised designs.

¹⁶ Barkcloth made by the Fijian method of joining strips of bark by beating
together their overlapping edges and ornamented with a stencil.

THE POTTERY OF THE LAU ISLANDS, FIJI.

BY LAURA THOMPSON, Ph.D.,
Honolulu.

114 **T**his study is part of the results of a field trip to the Lau islands in 1933-34, made possible by a Bernice P. Bishop Museum fellowship.

The description is based on a study of 467 potsherds from Kambara, Wangava, Fulanga, and Mothe, and one pot from Levuka, Lakemba, in the Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu.

TYPE

323 No earthenware pots are made in the Lau islands to-day,
177 and only a few pots are seen, but potsherds are found in
172 large numbers in old hamlet—(*tokatoka*), and fortified
village—(*koro*) sites.

323 The pottery of Lau is a relatively rough type with
531 little or no ornamentation. It is reddish ware of coarse
172 texture, tempered with sand, and often incompletely fired.
The sherds show that the walls of the pots varied in thickness from .3 centimetres (sherds from Nakorombalava, fortified cave on Wangava) to 1.7 centimetres (sherds from Ndelaïmakotu hill fort on Mothe). A few sherds show incised designs on the outer surface of the wall. The designs consist of roughly-executed, incised cross-hatched lines, zigzag lines, dotted lines, and faintly incised parallel grooves (Pl. A, fig. 1). Some of the sherds show impressions of mats with check-weave like those in use to-day. The rims of the sherds are upstanding or slightly bent, either inward or outward. Fragments of necks with slightly outward-bent edge are common. As a rule, the edges of the rims are decorated with incised straight, zigzag, or hatched lines, dotted lines, or raised dots. (Pl. A, fig. 2.) Some of the sherds are perforated, but none show spouts or lugs. No traces of varnish could be detected on the surface of the sherds, although informants in Levuka, Lakemba (where pots were formerly made) say that a varnish was used on certain types of pots.

[pp 1-108 not processed]

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323 The pots were made in a shed, according to the built-up,
 463 lump-technique of the Levukans. Two main types of pots
 438 were made: *ndolokoto* and *ndari*. The *ndolokoto* was a large
 cooking-pot, one to two metres high, and up to one and a
 half metres in diameter. The pot was rounded, so that it
 could not stand upright. It was laid on its side on two
 stones over the fire. The pot had two narrow mouths, one
 at each end. The *ndari* was a basin or bowl made in various
 [53] sizes and used for kava or for pudding. It was decorated
 with incised geometric designs around the rim. The
 Kambara women traded mats for Levuka pots. Occasionally
 the Kambara men obtained pots in Levuka.

The Kambara women were not pot-makers, but
 informants remember that one woman who made pots lived
 in Tokalau for many years. Her name was Tara Nevini
 from Nandurumbua sib, Nggalikarua village, Matuku. She
 left Kambara just before the measles epidemic in 1875.

[317] On Oneate the Levuka women made pots of red clay
 (*nggele ndamu*) found on the hills, mixed with black sand
 (*nuku loaloa*) from Sovilolo, a beach on the island. According
 to Tui Oneate (chief of Oneate), when the Levuka people
 were succeeded by Katumbalevu, they moved to Oneate,
 where they lived until they were recalled to Lakemba.*

Pots were imported into southern Lau from the island
 of Matuku. They were made in the village of Nggalikarua.

Pots from Kandavu were also traded in southern Lau.
 On Kambara they were exchanged for barkcloth (*ngatu*),
 wooden kava-bowls (*kumete ni yanggona*), food-bowls
 (*kumete ni kana manioke*), perfumed oil (*waliwali*), and
 [435] digging-sticks (*saupa*). There was no standard of value,
 but the women say one large Kandavu pot was equivalent
 to about one wooden kava-bowl or to one sheet of barkcloth
 (*ngatu*) (about three by three metres) and one container
 (*fango*) of coconut-oil.

[439] Pots from fabrication centres in Tailevu on Viti Levu
 also found their way to Lau.

* For further information concerning the Levuka potters see
 Hocart, A.M., *The Lau islands, Fiji, Bishop Museum Bul. 62, 1929,*
 pp. 18-19.

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8: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1938

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Fig. 3.

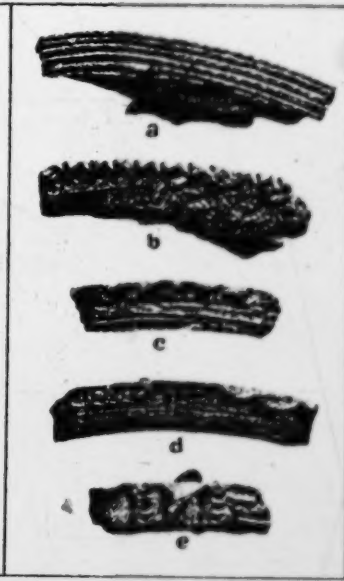


Fig. 2.



Fig. 1.

Plate A.

[Facing P. 113]

Pottery of the Lau Islands, Fiji

113✓

FIGURES.

(Courtesy of the Bishop Museum)

PLATE A.

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Fig. 1. Potsherds with wall-surface decoration: a, b, c, (C7475) sherds apparently from one pot showing incised geometric designs in lines and dots; perforated wall; thickness .6—1 centimetre; found on the surface, Ndelaiothe fortress-site, Mothe; d, (C7421) sherd with incised dotted lines, thickness .7 centimetre, found on the surface, Nakoro fortress-site, Kambara; e, (C7421) sherd with mat-impressed surface, thickness .7 centimetre, from the same site; f, (C7421) incised sherd with perforation, thickness 1.1 centimetres, from the same site; g, (C7475) sherd with incised cross-hatching, thickness .7 centimetre, from the surface, Ndelaiothe fortress-site, Mothe.

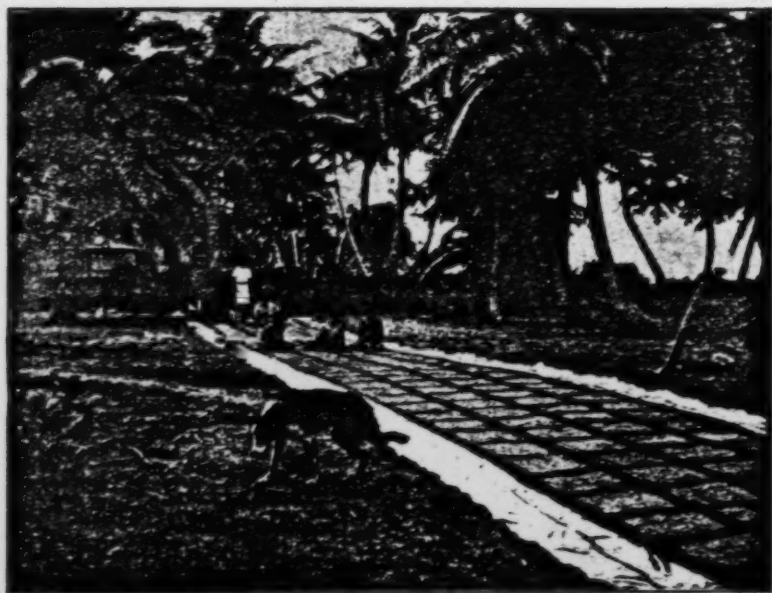
Fig. 2. Potsherds with incised rim-decoration: a, (C7417) thickness at edge 1.2 centimetres, found 1 metre below the surface, Nakorovusa fortress-site, Kambara; b, (C7418) thickness at edge 1.6 centimetres, found on the surface, Nakorovusa fortress-site, Kambara; c, (C7419) thickness at edge 1.5 centimetres, found on the surface at Naisevou fortress-site, Kambara; d, (C7418) thickness at edge 1.7 centimetres, found with b; e, (C7418) thickness at edge 1.5 centimetres, found with b and d.

Fig. 3. Clay water-jar (C1943). This type was formerly made at Levuka, Lakemba, where it is called *sungga*.

[pp 114- end, not processed]

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"Designing the brown and black patterns on a huge sheet of
white tappa."

[Facing p. 124]

123 in the morning whether, even at this day, the
 776 ancient heathen observances of Dakuwaqa,¹ the
 shark-god, still lingered among the people.

I had noticed one of my policemen among them, and next morning, after a few questions on other matters, I said, "By the way, Apenai, what was that little talk of Dakuwaqa I heard among you men at the wharf last night?" Apenai looked a bit confused, and then replied, "Oh, no, sir; I had nothing to do with that. I had only just arrived when they started to lower the *Yaqona* to Dakuwaqa. They are *lialia*² to do such things in these enlightened times. It is true, sir, that this morning it was found that the *Yaqona* had been accepted and taken away; but, perhaps, it was not Dakuwaqa after all. No one believes in Dakuwaqa nowadays." But, for all his protests, I firmly believed that my trusty constable had had more than a passing interest in the little tribute to Dakuwaqa, and I decided to ask Adi Letila to tell me more of this mysterious creature, the shark-god who patrolled these waters and disturbed even the official minds of "the force."

[115] That afternoon I found the old lady just
 [531] putting away her stencilling outfit of cut banana
 [285] leaves and *kosa* dyes; for she had had a busy day, for all her seventy odd years, at designing the brown and black patterns on a huge sheet of

¹ Literally, the hull or back of a ship, implying his enormous size.

² Foolish.